

FashionManiac

Experiencing Jennifer Elster's "Retrospective of an Extroverted Recluse Part One"

Fattie • May 13, 2017

ARTIST JENNIFER ELSTER AT THE NEW MUSEUM, NYC



WHO:

Jennifer Elster joined by artists including *Jonas Mekas*, *Heidi Hatry* (celebrating her book, *Icons in Ash*), *Danielle Blau*, *Lutz Rath*, *Anthony Haden-Guest*, and others.

WHAT:

An evening of death related art, music, and spoken word performances

WHEN:

Friday May 12th, 2017

WHERE:

New Museum

235 Bowery New York, NY 10002

American artist **Jennifer Elster** screened the video art piece *UNKNOWN* and performed *AMID THE BEAUTY* and *CEMETERY: IS DEATH?* at the *NEW MUSEUM* in an evening of death related art, music, and spoken word.

Other performances, included one by **Jonas Mekas** reading a poem about *Allen's Ginsberg death* accompanied by **Allen Ginsberg's** beard.

The evening celebrated **Heide Hatry's** book, *Icons in Ash*.



The evening began with the video art piece *UNKNOWN* by *Jennifer Elster* which began with *NUCLEAR CODES*, a portrayal of *Elster* as a victim to the current world crisis, alone, isolated in a fetal position, wearing a gas mask and suit, harshly cut against nuclear explosions from the National Archives.

NUCLEAR CODES

was followed by the video art piece

SLOWING DOWN TIME BUT THE TIME DOESN'T SLOW TIME.

AMID THE BEAUTY

was a song for the audience's soul, pleading them to care about one another and the world.

"We all need to care" being sung felt both utterly warm and hauntingly concerning for the future. The song ended on "Amid the beauty I see pending death everywhere."

CEMETERY: IS DEATH?



Elster repeated the question IS DEATH FINITE? over and over in a maniacal explosion of humor, rage and dance that both rattled the audience and also made them feel like dancing.

Statement:

"My work is a study to understand the world in the barest of ways." — Jennifer Elster

Bio:



photograph by Christian Witkin

Jennifer Elster is a Native *New Yorker*, experimentalist, thinker, artist, filmmaker, writer, photographer and performer.

Elster, obsessed with the truth, explores boundaries in all mediums and has collaborated with such artists as *Bowie* and *Yoko*.

Using words, paper, canvases, photographs, audio, video and performance art, *Elster* explores ways to deal with the severity of reality.

Previously working out of the public eye, last year *Elster* emerged to exhibit her first public art show *The Retrospective of an Extroverted Recluse*.

Culled from a large body of work amassed over *Elster's* life the show revealed the arc in *Elster's* thinking throughout and up until her most recent work *WARFARE* which spoke directly and called out, months in advance, the current climate in America



One of *Elster's* upcoming projects is the experimental film series *In the Woods* — where she spent ten years filming people in the woods.

The premise of the films are marked by *Elster's* unusual instructions —no one knows what is going on.

Such subjects as **Terrence Howard, Temple Grandin, Alan Cumming, Rufus Wainwright, Aimee Mullins, Questlove** and many others have participated.

Elster spent years of deep, and, at times, bizarre excavation into the recesses of her mind and the minds of her subjects, analyzing the depths of human nature.

Elster has been performing and hosting art happenings in her studio The Development underground in *New York City* to bring a deeper awareness to the human condition and our current world crisis.

Recently *Elster* has been doing performance art shows at staple *New York City* locations and was in a group exhibition in the *New York City, Central Booking Gallery* (alongside work by **Carolee Schneemann** and **Kate Millett**).

"Like most of us, I am worried about the future of this country and the world. In these divided times, we need to come together even more so. Each one of us has the power to create a better world. Person by person. Individually and collectively. We can make a change. We shouldn't allow anger and hate to dominate this beautiful planet. It can get so much worse if we convince ourselves that our own footprint will not make a difference." – Jennifer Elster